(c) whether this direction would adversely affect the Indo-Pak relation;

(d) if so, the deficits thereof; and

(e) the policies adopted by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) In September-October, 2004, Passport Office Srinagar issued a few passports valid for all countries except Pakistan. This was done as recommended by the State CID. However, as soon as this was brought to the notice of the Government, Passport Offices in Srinagar and Jammu were instructed to issue passports without any restrictions as was the case earlier.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

(e) Passports are issued "Valid for all Countries".

Strategic Partnership with USA

749. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and America would be into a second phase of the Strategic Partnership as appeared in media;

(b) if so, the detailed report on the discussions that took place since this Government came to power; and

(c) if so, how would it improve our relations with USA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) seeks to enhance cooperation in civilian space, civilian nuclear energy, 'dual use' items and missile defence areas and is designed to progress through a series of reciprocal steps that build on each other. Since January 2004, the two governments have worked closely to conclude Phase One of the NSSP. This has included implementation of measures to address export control concerns. These efforts have enableed the US to make modifications to US export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programmes and permit certain exports to power plants at safeguarded nuclear facilities. ISRO Headquarters has been removed from the Department of Commerce Entity List. The

completion of Phase One of NSSP was announced in a Joint Statement on 17 September, 2004 during Foreign Secretary's visit to US. Since then both countries have started discussions to proceed further onto the next phase.

(c) NSSP sets the direction for further development of the Indo-U.S. strategic partnership and provides the framework for the two nations to work together in critical areas to mutual benefit.

Indo-Pak discussions

†750. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the discussions taken place during last three years between India Pakistan; and

(b) the subjects that would come for discussion in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Following the terrorist attack on Parliament on December 13, 2001, India had taken a number of steps, including the recall of the High Commissioner, termination of Delhi-Lahore bus service, Samjhauta Express, air links, and reduction in size of respective High Commissions. India also impressed upon Pakistan the need to put an end to cross border infiltration and terrorism, and to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism in Pakistan on a permanent basis.

Later, after India extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan in April 2003, and based on the commitment given by President Musharraf on January 6,2004 not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, the Composite Dialogue was resumed. Steps were taken to normalize diplomatic and other links. Within the framework of the Composite Dialogue, discussions were held on the subjects of Peace and Security including CBMs, Jammu and Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbul Navigation Project, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields. India made a large number of proposals for confidence building, interaction and cooperation.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.